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**The ubiquitous *faqīh*: a reconsideration of
the terms *īmān*, *islām* and *'ilm* and their
role in the rise to predominance of the
jurist in the Islamic world of learning**

by

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To Paul, with gratitude and affection

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The ubiquitous *faqīh*: a reconsideration of the terms *īmān*, *islām* and *‘ilm* and their role in the rise to predominance of the jurist in the Islamic world of learning

Introduction

One of the essential theological questions, discussed at a very early time and upon which the schools of *fiqh* and *kalām* were divided, concerns the concepts of *īmān* and *islām*, and whether there is a distinction between the two. The question was prompted originally by speculation over whether certain sins committed by Muslims would lead to their loss of belief (*īmān*) or their expulsion from the fold of Islam. The Murji'ites were particularly active in the debates which centred upon this question.¹

That there is a difference between *īmān* and *islām* is a fact which, in the first half of this paper, I will attempt to clarify with the aid of evidence from the Quran, the traditions (*ḥadīth*) - both Sunnite and Shi'ite - and various works of Quranic exegesis or *tafsir*. The point I wish to make is not a theological one, designed to solve the kind of problems raised by the Murji'ites and their contemporaries; rather, it is to show how a confusion of the two terms *mu'min* (believer) and *muslim*, and the general inability to distinguish between the two, have facilitated the rise in importance of the *faqīh* throughout the ages and played a crucial part in the limitation of the concept of knowledge in Islam to the domain of jurisprudence and, in modern times, politics and affairs of state. Furthermore, the failure to recognise that there are basically two kinds of *islām* described by the Quran - the real and the nominal - , together with the fact that it is possible to be a Muslim without being a believer in the Quranic sense of the word, has generated a sense of complacency amongst most Muslims with respect to their duties *vis-à-vis* the commands made by the Quran concerning knowledge and belief.

The process whereby a man comes to believe in a Creator starts, so far as the Quran is concerned, with the act of *tafakkur* (thought or deliberation). The Quran declares in no uncertain terms that the whole of the cosmos is, as it were, a great, open book which is to be pondered, understood and interpreted. It also says that those among mankind who possess intelligence, insight, understanding, discernment and knowledge will ultimately be able to know the meaning of the 'Book of Creation', for the cosmos is replete with 'signs' (*āyāt*) which point to its Creator: the cosmos 'speaks' to man as a revelation of God.² The cosmos has a meaning over and above itself: knowledge about the cosmos is of use only if it leads man to the realisation that there is a Creator. At this point - or rather at every point of realisation - man may submit to the knowledge he has obtained or choose to ignore or cover (*kafara*) it and deny the divine origin of the cosmos.³ If he does submit to the knowledge he has acquired concerning the Creator of the cosmos, he has entered the initial stages of *islām* (submission). The logical outcome of this initial stage of submission is adherence to the commands of the Creator, which manifest themselves in the code of

social, economic and political regulations known as the Islamic *sharīʿa*. Personal acts of obedience such as prayer, fasting, almsgiving etc. are an integral part of this code: one who adheres to these regulations is known as a Muslim, and is accepted as a member of the Islamic community (*umma*). There are, thus, two basic stages of submission, one which is internal and concerns *īmān*, and one which is external and concerns the outward display of obedience. As I shall attempt to show, the Quran declares that it is possible to submit externally without submitting internally, which means that whoever is born into an Islamic community cannot assume that he is automatically a believer simply because his parents and culture are Islamic. It is not the concern of this paper to prove whether or not Muslims are true believers in their own revelation; the point I wish to make here is that there does exist a very clear difference between, firstly, *īmān* and *islām*, and secondly between submission to God (*islām*) and submission to God's rules (Islam). That there exists a huge majority for whom Islam in its external sense is equated automatically with the internal act of belief and submission referred to as *islām* is admitted by Muslim and non-Muslim scholars alike.⁴ What is generally overlooked is the fact that this tendency to ignore, or inability to recognise, the difference between *īmān* and the two types of *islām* has effectively shifted the focus from the fundamentals of the faith (*uṣūl al-dīn*) to the secondary principles (*furūʿ al-dīn*): since *īmān* is internal and cannot be gauged by others it is overshadowed by Islam, which is external and governed by a code of rules and regulations, the derivation, interpretation and implementation of which constitute a domain of highly specialised knowledge occupied by the *faqīh* or jurist. In actual fact, the Quran affirms that belief may increase or decrease, however, when belief is equated with Islam, the fact that a believer's *īmān* is either on the increase or the decrease tends to be ignored: since Islam is static, *īmān* is also understood to be static. As a result, the commands in the Quran which exhort the believers to check themselves and their belief constantly are overlooked or misinterpreted. Consequently, the concept of *daʿwa* or 'calling to belief' is focused erroneously on non-believers outside the Islamic community; within the Islamic community itself, the lion's share of Islamic teaching is taken by the *faqīh*, who instructs the people in Islam but not in *īmān*. According to the Malaysian scholar Naquib al-Attas, confusion and error concerning the concept of knowledge among Muslims has led to the rise of false leaders in all spheres of life, particularly in the fields of knowledge which are not obligatory (*fard al-ʿayn*). al-Attas says:

The rise of false leaders in all spheres of life which follows from loss of *adab* and confusion and error in knowledge respectively means in this particular case the rise of false '*ulamāʾ*' who restrict knowledge (*al-ʿilm*) to the domain of jurisprudence (*fiqh*). They are not worthy followers of the *mujtahidūn* ... they are not men of keen intelligence and profound insight, nor are they men of integrity in keeping the trust of right spiritual leadership. Notwithstanding the fact that the Holy Quran repeatedly condemns it, they delight in endless controversy, disputations and polemics which succeed only in making mountains out of jurisprudential molehills in whose blind paths the generality of Muslims are left guideless and bewildered.⁵

Confusion in belief, says al-Attas, stems from ignorance of *tawhīd* and the fundamental articles of faith and other related essentials of belief. As a result, inordinate attention is lavished upon the category of knowledge known as *ʿilal al-kifāya*,⁶ i.e. the secondary principles which on the individual level relate to matters of personal conduct and on the social level to the problems of state and society. Ignorance of *tawhīd*, which is facilitated by the assumption that a Muslim must automatically be a believer, and over-emphasis on the secondary branches of knowledge (*furūʿ*) pave the way for the ascendance of the *faqīh*, the fact that the word *ʿilm* as used in the Quran is open to interpretation further enables the *faqīh* to strengthen his position by conveniently 'limiting' knowledge to the domain of jurisprudence.

Thus it is that the question of differentiation between *īmān* and *islām* (submission) and Islam, plus the relationship between this and the concept of knowledge in Islam, must be understood if one is to perceive why it is that the *faqīh* has, from among all divisions of Muslim scholars, been able to gain the upper hand in the world of Islamic learning, especially in the context of Twelver Shi'ism and Twelver Shi'ite Iran.

The concepts of *īmān* and *islām* as presented in the Quran

īmān is the verbal noun of the fourth form of the root *āmāna* which connotes trust, loyalty and security. The fourth form has the double meaning of 'to believe' and 'to protect' or 'place in safety'.

There are over five hundred and seventy references in the Quran to words which are derived from the root *āmāna*. Of these, almost half describe 'those who believe'. The most superficial study of the Quran reveals that the derivatives of the root *āmāna* preponderate to an overwhelming degree over the derivatives of the root *aslama*, 'to submit'. That belief and submission are different is clear; the constant use of the word 'belief' or 'believers' would suggest quite conclusively that *īmān* is the most crucial element in a believer's make-up. Hundreds of verses in the Quran contain counsels of wisdom, commandments or admonitions beginning with the phrase 'O ye who believe!' The definition of a believer - one who has *īmān* - can be found in many verses in the Quran.

The principal requisite of belief is that the individual should attain to a state of perception and reflection in which he sees all the world not as 'natural' phenomena but as signs or *āyāt* of God. All 'natural' phenomena are deemed by the Quran to point to Him.⁷ The word *āyāt* denotes not only the verses of the Quran but also the material constituents of the cosmos. Intellect is the prerequisite of belief: intellect has to be applied to the signs in order for belief to obtain. Verse 29:35, for instance, cites the destruction of those who defied the prophet Lot as a 'sign for those who have understanding'.⁸ According to the Iranian scholar and politician, Sayyid 'Alī Ḥusaynī Khaminī, *īmān* is something 'without which all actions and efforts are fruitless and ultimately futile'.⁹ As for the role of the intellect and reason in belief, he says:

Belief must be the result of a conscious choice and the use of personal awareness and understanding, not the result of blind acceptance and imitation (*taqlīd*). It is thus that true believers can be differentiated from the masses, whose belief is generally worthless and without substance.¹⁰

Belief is primarily in five - or, according to some, six - things: God, prophethood, angels, the revealed Books, the Last Day, and Divine Decree and Determination (*qadā' wa qadar*).¹¹ Believers are those who, when God is mentioned, 'feel a tremor in their hearts, and when they hear His signs rehearsed, find their faith strengthened and put all their trust in their Lord.'¹²

The word *zāda*, translated here as 'strengthened', connotes the idea of increase; from this verse it may be understood that belief may increase or decrease, and that fluctuations in belief depend on the individual's reaction to the aforementioned 'rehearsal of signs' (*tilāwat al-āyāt*). Indeed, verse 8:4 confirms that there are degrees of belief.¹³ In verse 9:124, the constant revelation of new aspects of God's truth is cited as a reason for the increase in faith of the believers. Since belief is connected to deliberation and intellectual contemplation of the 'signs', and since the revelation of signs is deemed to be constant,¹⁴ it would appear that the only way a believer can retain and increase his belief is through constant awareness, deliberation and remembrance.¹⁵ In verse 4:136, the believers are exhorted to believe in God, a command that would be meaningless were belief incapable of increase and decrease.¹⁶ Therefore, the prerequisites of belief - namely deliberation upon the *āyāt*, selective use of '*aql*' or reason, remembrance of the Creator - must be at hand constantly if belief is to be increased. Belief cannot, on these terms, be static: the Hanafite stance which holds that there is no increase or decrease in belief must therefore be understood not in terms of quality of belief but in terms of the number of principles or items that are to be believed in. Even though some schools include 'acts of righteousness' within belief, it is clear that the concept of *īmān* is fundamentally different from the acts that it engenders: *īmān*, according to the Quran, can increase or decrease; the obligatory number of prayers, or days of fasting, or amount of *zakāt* and so on can not. Thus the emphasis of the Quran is upon the inner state of belief and not upon the external acts of obedience. The Quran does, quite understandably, stress the importance of 'acts of righteousness', but even the most cursory study of the verses shows that the Quran's preoccupation with topics related to *īmān* far outweighs its commands to pray, fast, and pay *zakāt*.¹⁷ A famous Prophetic tradition asserts that an hour's contemplation (*tafakkur*) is better than a year's worship, i.e. with the 'worship' (*ibāda*) being taken to mean the external acts of devotion such as prayer and fasting. This is not to imply that the devotional acts are worthless; on the contrary, in verses such as 9:71, acts such as prayers, the giving of alms, enjoining that which is good and forbidding that which is bad and so on are included within the definition of true belief. The verse in question acknowledges the value of acts but puts emphasis on the *īmān* which must underlie those acts; the Quran affirms quite clearly the fact that it is belief which enjoys priority, and that actions are meaningful only if they are based on, and motivated by, a foundation of

belief.¹⁸ From the numerous counsels of wisdom and admonition that begin with the phrase 'O ye who believe!', it becomes clear that the Islamic revelation as a source of guidance and education for its followers approaches those followers principally in terms of belief.

The term *islām* as used in the Quran

The term *islām* is the verbal noun of the fourth form Arabic verb *aslama*, which means literally 'to commit' or 'resign oneself', 'to submit to the will of God'.¹⁹ The first form verb *salama*, from which *aslama* is derived, connotes security and peace; consequently, one who submits his will to that of God is supposed to enter a state of security and peacefulness. Further derived from this root is the word *salām*, used as a ritual greeting between Muslims.

The word *salām* may have been one of the first signs of reference to the communal faith of Islam - a badge, as it were, denoting the status of the individual. The Quran itself alludes to this: in verse 4:94, Muḥammad and his companions are instructed not to accuse those who offer the customary salutation i.e. (*salām ʿalaykum*) of being unbelievers, but rather to investigate the matter carefully. The salutation, therefore, is a sign that the individual has made at least a verbal proclamation of submission.²⁰

The Quran points consistently to a prefiguration of *islām* in the faith of the prophets who preceded Muḥammad. In this context the words *muslim* and *ḥanīf* are synonymous.²¹ Verse 2:136 declares that there is no difference between the various prophets, and that the most salient common factor is their submission.²² The common ground between Muslims and the 'people of the Book' (*ahl al-kitāb*) is that they are all *muslim*, submitting their wills to God. Noah was commanded to bow down to God as a *muslim*,²³ the children of Abraham prayed to God to make them *muslim*,²⁴ and the children of Jacob tell their father on his deathbed that they will be *muslim* to the one God.²⁵ Joseph beseeches God to let him die as a *muslim* so that he may join the ranks of the blessed.²⁶ The disciples of Jesus declare their belief and submission, asking to 'bear witness that we are *muslim*'.²⁷ In these and other verses the word *muslim* is used in a sense which precedes its current meaning as one who believes in the particular religion of Muḥammad or one who is part of the Islamic community. It clearly means individual submission to God, the kind of submission that follows on from, and complements, *īmān*.

The word *islām* as a noun of action has, then, a double meaning: primarily - and originally - that of submission; secondly, adherence to the religion of Muḥammad. In Medina, Islam attained self-consciousness when it became a separate religion with its own laws and codes of personal and societal behaviour. The word Muslim was used to distinguish the members of the new community: it acquired a new meaning, distinct from the old one, which meant one who resigns himself to God. Although it is difficult to separate the technical and ordinary uses of the word *islām* in the Quran, it is obvious that two distinct connotations are intended. Verse 2:112, for example, describes a state in

which the whole self is submitted. Yusuf Ali interprets this as the whole inner self and, since the notion of *ihsān* is also mentioned, concludes that this *islām* must comprise *īmān* as well.²⁸ Given that the prophets and their followers before Muḥammad adhered to *islām*, it is clear that the word when used in this sense does not signify the particular codified religion of Islam. To contrast with this, verse 5:4 has Muḥammad declaring that he has 'chosen Islam for you as your religion';²⁹ this obviously refers to the outward profession of belief enshrined in the laws and codes of behaviour peculiar to him and his followers, i.e. Islam the communal religion rather than *islām* the individual submission of the whole inner self. This does not mean that *islām* and Islam are two wholly separate concepts. According to Sayyid Ḥasan 'Askarī,

Islam is the only religion which consciously chose a name for itself. It did not call itself the name of its founder, or community or country. Its self-naming was descriptive and normative of the essential nature of man, namely, that he has the potentiality to remember and realise his original destiny: that he can live in an active state of *islām*, of surrender to God.³⁰

Thus according to the Quran, *islām* or personal surrender and submission to God should logically lead to Islam, or adherence to the laws and rules of behaviour as revealed by God through the medium of Muḥammad. One who has *īmān* should also have *islām* and, as a corollary, Islam.

While Islam denotes the adherence of a *muslim* to the Muslim community, the Quran tells of instances in which individuals claim to have submitted but, in actuality, have no real *īmān*. Their claim may be solely a verbal profession of faith, or it may be backed with the performance of certain acts of devotion such as prayer and fasting. The verse which demonstrates this situation most effectively is 49:14:

The desert Arabs say: 'We believe.' Say: 'Ye do not believe; only say that "We have submitted," for not yet has faith entered your hearts.'

The above verse is said to concern the tribe of Banū Asad, who came to profess Islam in the presence of Muḥammad in order to receive charity during a famine. The term 'submission' in this verse can thus mean only a verbal profession of adherence to Islam, and not the inner submission of the whole self that is understood from the majority of verses concerning *islām*.

The difference between *īmān* and *islām* will be delineated in full further on in this section; that the Quran accepts such a difference is clear from numerous verses, one of the most unambiguous being 2:208, in which the believers are instructed to enter wholeheartedly into *islām*.³¹

The difference between *īmān* and *islām*: the Sunni viewpoint

According to the *Musnad* of Ibn Hanbal, 'Islam is external; faith belongs to the heart'.³² The act of 'surrender to God' is, therefore, in this sense expressed by holding fast to the ritual observances prescribed by religious law. God alone judges men's hearts and thus the reality of belief: the judgement of men may concern itself with Islam. The 'science' of *fiqh* has been called '*maqām al-Islām*' by the Sufis.³³

Many Hanafites and Maturidites consider *islām* and *īmān* to be synonymous, yet define each of them separately as a verbal confession (*iqrār*), sometimes linking this with intimate adherence or with knowledge of the heart, or both. The second-century (AH) work of Hanafite theology, *Fiqh al-akbar* and the third-century Wasiyyat Abī Hanīfa ignore the question altogether. The *Fiqh-i Akbar II* draws a distinction: *islām* is equated with total surrender (*taslīm*) and total obedience (*inqiyād*) to the divine laws. According to this text, 'there is no faith without Islam and Islam without faith cannot be found'.³⁴

The Ash'arites and Shafi'ites make a distinction between *īmān* and *islām*. al-Ash'arī, for example, identifies *islām* with the two constituent parts of the *shahāda*, in other words with the verbal testimony which grants admission to the community of the Prophet,³⁵ and concludes that *islām* is different from *īmān*. In the *Ibāna*, it is stated that *islām* is wider than belief; accordingly, 'all *islām* is not faith'.³⁶ The late Ash'arites were able to claim that Islam - the observance of the prescriptions ordained by law, and above all the explicit profession of the *shahāda* - can be practised without belief, and that belief can exist without Islam. But Islam without belief is the way of the hypocrites (*munāfiqūn*); belief without Islam is not culpable, in the event of some external obstacle, although it would be if the testimony to Islam were not given through half-heartedness or weakness. It would then be a question of *īṣq* (prevarication resulting from sin) rather than unbelief. al-Jurjānī, a Shafi'ite, says that 'Islam is the verbal profession of faith without the agreement of the heart, while faith is the agreement of the heart and the tongue'.³⁷

For Ibn Taymiyya, Islam is the 'external and, so to speak, social application of the law,' and '*īmān* is the interiorization of Islam'.³⁸ Since it is the external and social application of the law which is the binding force of the ideal Islamic society, it is with this Islam that the jurists are concerned. Wherever the Quranic prescriptions are observed communally, there Islam will be. The point of first importance for the jurist who is studying and formulating the statutes and laws of the *bilād al-Islām* is not so much *īmān* but rather the communal observance of those prescriptions which make up Islam. Thus a synonym of *dār al-Islām* was to be *dār al-ʿadl*, where the rights of men ordained by the Quran are observed and protected. Anyone who describes himself as a Muslim means to affirm thereby not so much his care for the practice and personal observances as for adherence to a community of those who acknowledge the Quran and Muḥammad.³⁹

The term *islām* in the *taʿsīr* literature

Whereas *īmān* is used generally as an expression of the internal response to, and affirmation of, God's revelation to man, the term *islām* possesses an inherent flexibility that allows it to encompass diversity and often extremes of understanding within the expressions of a single writer. That there exists a clear distinction between the communal and personal aspects of the term *islām* is obvious from the verses of the Quran. The much cited 'Banū Asad' verse (49:14) shows that *īmān* is to be distinguished from *islām*, another important point which emerges from this verse is that *islām* itself may be seen from two different angles: the wholehearted, personal submission of the individual - an integral part of *īmān* - and the communal expression of submission known universally as the religion of Islam. According to Kenneth Cragg,

There is the general and the specific; the idea and its definitive expression; the thing itself and the thing in its 'institution'. Islam organises *islām*, enshrines it and defines it.⁴⁰

Theoretically, then, the Islamic community consists of individuals who have come to believe in God and who have submitted their wills to His. For the average Muslim, these two aspects - the personal and the communal - have been traditionally indistinguishable, even though the distinction is clear when one compares the Banū Asad verse, in which the submission referred to is both communal and, more importantly, strictly nominal, with verses such as 2:112, in which the idea of submission is that of the whole self.⁴¹ Likewise, verse 4:94 concerns the possibility of nominal submission, represented in this case by the symbolic salutation (*salām*) offered by one Muslim to another, whereas verse 31:22, for instance, refers to the submission of the whole inner self, plus *iḥsān* or the unselfish worship of God.⁴²

An individual who submits his inner self totally to the will of God is, by definition, a *muslim*: the logical corollary of his act of submission should be an outward and external display of faith that will instate him automatically as a member of the community of Islam. If *islām* is personal and Islam communal, then he will be both *muslim* and Muslim.⁴³ This position is similar to statements in formal logic such as 'All Frenchmen are Europeans but not all Europeans are Frenchmen'. All *muslims* are Muslims, but not all Muslims are *muslims*. The indistinguishability of the two aspects of the term in the minds of the majority of the Muslim masses may be a reflection of the fact that in the very early days of Islam it may have indeed been possible to assert that all Muslims were also *muslims*, for the simple reason that it was only through the union of *muslims* that the first Muslim community was able to come into existence. Furthermore, the era of Muḥammad and his companions is idealised by Muslims in general as the 'ideal age' or 'age of felicity' (*ʿaṣr al-saʿāda*), in which Muḥammad 'perfected the religion'.⁴⁴ It is possible, then, that the desire to preserve the concept of an ideal age and an exemplary Islamic community actually prevented the earlier exegetes not only from drawing a clear distinction between

the personal and communal aspects of the term *islām* but also from freely admitting the possibility that an individual might be Muslim but not *muslim*.

However, changes of understanding *vis-à-vis* the term *islām* do appear to have taken place; this much can be discerned from a comparative study of Quranic works of *tafsīr*.

For Fakhr al-dīn al-Rāzī, *islām* must always constitute a matter for the heart, if not, it cannot be called *islām*. As such, *islām* becomes coterminous with *īmān*. al-Rāzī agrees that while *īmān* and *islām* are different in generality, they are one in existence.⁴⁵ Rashīd Riḍā offers a similar interpretation when he says that both *īmān* and *islām* are considered to constitute specialised belief (*īmān khāṣṣ*), the only religion (*dīn*) acceptable to God, and the only means of human salvation.⁴⁶ For other exegetes, both Shi'ite and Sunni, *islām* is part of *īmān* and constitutes one element in the acceptance and confirmation (*taṣdīq*) of Divine Unity (*tawḥīd*), whereby man proclaims his sincere belief in the unity (*ahadiyya*) and unicity (*wāḥidiyya*) of God and incorporates into his own existence and world-view the integrity that is based on the Divine Unity. Here, *īmān* precedes submission (*islām*), forming the two basic initial steps of a process of belief that is mentioned time and time again in the Quran: *īmān* always precedes *islām*, good deeds (*a'māl ṣāliha*), emigration (*hijra*) etc.⁴⁷ Many other exegetes do understand a basic difference between *īmān* and *islām*, admitting that *islām* can have a purely external meaning while *īmān* refers to the internal belief in, and confirmation of, the Divine Unity and all of the sacred truths that recognition of the Divine Unity brings into focus. When the term *islām* is isolated, it can be seen as both the expression of individual submission to the will of God and as the name of the group of those who have submitted. The American orientalist Jane Smith describes the aspect of individual submission as a 'vertical relationship' between the Creator and the created, and the aspect of communal submission as a 'horizontal relationship' between the individual and the community.⁴⁸ This understanding misses one important point, however, for it ignores the fact that there are two definitions of *islām*: the true state of inner submission (*islām*), and the adherence - be it as a logical corollary of *islām* or purely in name only - to the external rites and rituals that comprise the religion of the community (Islam).

Historically, writers have used the form Islam when referring to the historical Muslim community with its objectification and systematisation of beliefs and ritual practices. This usage generally masks the fact that the term also denotes personal submission, with which Western orientalisists are most concerned when attempting to analyse and define *islām*.

In the early *tafsīr* literature, the apparent intention is the 'unified' meaning of *islām* as both individual submission and plural condition. Ibn 'Abbās, one of the earliest recorded exegetes and accepted by Sunnites and Shi'ites alike, states clearly that *islām* signifies *tawḥīd* (Divine Unity, or rather the acceptance thereof), yet also declares that one can be

born into *islām*/Islam. In his interpretation of verse 3:83, he claims that the word *taw'ān* (willingly) indicates those who are born into *islām*/Islam, and *karḥan* those who 'enter *al-islām* by the sword'.⁴⁹ Thus there seems to have been no conscious intellectual distinction made by the earlier exegetes between the individual responsibility to carry out the specific commandments of God and the fact that these regulations are incumbent on all of the members of the community and thus characterise that group itself.

In the exegesis of al-Ṭabarī, another stage in the understanding of *islām* may be discerned: the purely verbal - and thus necessarily external - submission by which the individual enters the nation (*milla*) of Islam. This is not of the same depth as *īmān*, which involves knowledge (*ilm*) and affirmation within the heart of the individual (*taṣdīq bi'l qalb*). However, this *īmān* is co-ordinate with the deeper *islām*, which in turn is nothing but the perfection of belief (*takmīl al-īmān*); as such it constitutes the total surrender of the heart, mind and body. In other words, it is the emotional response which leads to the physical acts of obedience. al-Ṭabarī cites the much-quoted Banū Asad verse (49:14) as an example of how one enters *millat al-Islām*, whereby one becomes Muslim but not necessarily *muslim* or *mu'min*.⁵⁰

Other exegetes did not seem to see the need to make such a clear distinction, leaving it open as to whether the *dīn* to which they refer is the personal *islām* of the individual or the communal state (Islam) of the followers of Muḥammad. Early discussions tended to centre upon the circumstances of Muḥammad's time and thus it is not surprising that their interpretation of the term *islām* reflected this 'unified' understanding of its individual and communal aspects. The focal point of their discussions is the Muslim community at the time of the Prophet. al-Ṭūsī, for instance, talks about the entry of all Arabs into *islām* at the time of the Prophet, but fails to throw any light on the condition of the Muslim community of his own era. Such *tafsīr* works deal almost exclusively with the 'reasons for revelation' (*ashāb al-nuzūl*) and interpret verses for the most part with reference to the events that occurred during the twenty-three years of Quranic revelation. Although the earlier exegetes do not allow themselves room for speculation (which is more germane to the particular type of Quranic interpretation known as *ta'wīl*), modern Quranic commentators do discuss their own times and circumstances. Rashīd Ridā, for instance, attacks what he sees as the ethnocentricity (*jinsiyya*) of modern Muslims:

For *al-dīn*, if it is not the true *islām* (i.e. submission) is nothing but codified formalities (*rasm*) and uncritical acceptance (*taqlīd*) which people adopt as a bond for ethnic identity (*jinsiyya*), an instrument of partisanship, and a means for worldly gain. This kind of *islām* increases the soul in evil and the hearts in corruption.⁵¹

As for the word *al-dīn* and its plural *adyān*, these became standard from the fifth century as in the interpretation of verses such as 61:7-9, in which *al-islām* is to be proclaimed over all religions. The interpretations of *dīn* and Islam are closely intertwined. It appears most likely that the Quranic exegetes intended a contrast between the religion of Islam and other religious communities when they used the term *adyān*, even though the

word used in 61:9 is singular and could easily mean the response of individuals rather than the plurality of religious systems.⁵² The Quranic promise that *dīn al-islām* would be victorious over all other religions can easily be understood in terms of social and political dominance at a time when the Islamic state was clearly in a position of flourishing power.

Therefore, several developments in the understanding of *islām* on the 'horizontal' relationship between individual and community can be discerned. It would appear that during the formative years of Quranic exegesis, the perception of *islām* as both personal submission and communal adherence - without a distinction made between the two - was simply another expression of unity. Then there follows the stage in which it appears that a form of self-conscious definition took the place of the earlier unconscious or automatic amalgamation of the two elements in one term: *islām* came to be clearly defined in terms of personal response and individual submission to the will and dictates of God. Gradually, indications of a more reified understanding of *islām* as a *dīn* or religion (Islam) appeared.

In the modern works of Quranic exegesis, things are quite different; we now begin to find specific reference to *islām* as something distinct from personal submission. Rashīd Ridā contrasts what he calls 'real *islām*' (*al-islām al-ḥaqīqī*) with habitual or conventional ('*urfī*') Islam, indicating that it is the association by ethnic identity with the religion of one's nationality or culture that can actually militate against and prevent true submission to the will of God.⁵³

Interpretations such as that of Rashīd Ridā represent a shift from the unity of individual submission and group identity to a firm distinction between the two. As stated previously, this distinction is highlighted in several verses of the Quran; for reasons already indicated, the true connotations of this distinction were masked by what was most likely a desire on the part of the exegetes to preserve unity. Ibn 'Abbās talked about being born into *islām* Islam yet did not indicate in what sense this differs from the *islām* of personal submission. Rashīd Ridā on the other hand expressly contrasts *al-islām al-jinsī* with *al-islām al-ḥaqīqī*. There is one sense in which Ridā does intend the unity of two meanings in one term: this is in his vision of an ideal society in which all members are freed from purely communal affiliations to the point where they are able to experience true personal *islām*. Whereas the unity expressed by earlier generations was of the individual and the actual, here it is of the individual and the ideal, i.e. what was, as opposed to what could be.

Thus for the traditional Quranic commentators, the term *islām* is used both as the individual act of submission and as the generic name for the community of those who have (in theory) submitted, with greater emphasis - as in the Quran - on the first element. There is no reference in the early literature to the 'ideal', only to the 'actual'. For the modern exegetes, true *islām* is the sincere submission of the individual and, ideally, the community, but it is *islām* in its real (*ḥaqīqī*) rather than its conventional ('*urfī*') sense that is required.

Twelver Shi'ite narrations

According to the sixth Shi'ite imam, Ja'far al-Sādiq, *islām* is the verbal proclamation of the *shahādātayn*. In a tradition narrated by al-Mufaddal, the Imam states that it is this proclamation which qualifies a man to be a member of the Muslim community: his blood (i.e. his life) becomes respected and protected; things may be entrusted to him; he may enter into marriage with a Muslim woman, and so on. However, the rewards to be had in the hereafter stem from *īmān* (*al-thawāb ʿala al-īmān*). In a similar tradition, al-Sādiq states that *īmān* is 'declaration' (*iqrār*) along with actions (*aʿmāl*), whereas *islām* is declaration without actions.⁵⁴ On the difference between *īmān* and *islām*, al-Sādiq says that *islām* is the 'external condition' (*al-wajh al-zāhirī*) by which Muslims are identified: this consists of the proclamation of the *shahādātayn* plus the performance of prayers, the giving of religious taxes (*zakāt*), fasting, pilgrimage, and so on. *īmān*, on the other hand, is all of the above plus recognition of the concept of *wilāya*.⁵⁵ One who believes in the importance of prayer and fasting but does not recognise *wilāya* is a misguided Muslim. *īmān* is that which involves the heart and thus leads man to God; *islām* consists of external words and actions. The word *wilāya* here is used in its Shi'ite sense; whether the narration is genuine or not is another question. So far as the Quran is concerned, the kind of *wilāya* understood by the Twelver Shi'ites does not constitute a pillar of belief; indeed there are even certain Twelver scholars who contradict the customary inclusion of *imāma* in the fundamentals of faith by declaring it to be a 'principle of *madhhab* rather than a principle of belief'.⁵⁶ The important fact which emerges from this tradition is that *īmān* and *islām* are perceived to be conceptually different, with *īmān* concerning the heart and thus forming the basis for Islam, which consists of all matters external and practical such as prayers and fasting and the like. The fifth Shi'ite Imam, Muḥammad al-Bāqir, reiterates the above in a tradition which has it that it is *īmān* alone which can lead man to God: actions, obedience and submission to God are but confirmations of belief.⁵⁷ Islam comprises those external words and deeds which identify a man as one of a community of Muslims. Islam does not require *īmān*, but *īmān* requires Islam. In this context, Islam and *īmān* may be likened to the *masjid al-ḥarām* and the *ka'ba*: the *ka'ba* is in the *masjid al-ḥarām*, but not all of the latter is in the former. With the *ka'ba* here representing *īmān*, the tradition is confirming that whoever has *īmān* will also have Islam, but not everyone who has Islam will necessarily have *īmān*. al-Bāqir at this point quotes verse 49.14, which deals with the opportunistically superficial submission of the Banū Asad tribe. The *mu'min* and the Muslim are on par so far as their special rights are concerned, but the *mu'min* is more exalted in the sight of God by virtue of the fact that his actions are based on true belief and not on blind imitation (*taqlīd*) or by force of geographical and cultural circumstance.⁵⁸

In a reply to a letter from one of his followers, al-Sādiq clarifies further the difference between *īmān* and *islām*: belief, he states, is the conviction (*'aqīda*) of the heart, coupled with a confession or declaration (*iqrār*) of this belief by the tongue, and also the implementation of the 'pillars of Islam' (i.e. prayers, fasting, and so on).⁵⁹ Islam is an 'external matter'; it may be that a person becomes Muslim before he becomes a true

believer, but no-one can become a true believer unless he becomes Muslim. al-Ṣādiq is confirming here that the crucial component is belief (*īmān*), and that it is possible to be a Muslim without actually being a believer. He then appears to confuse the issue by declaring that a person will not be a believer unless or until he becomes a Muslim. The ambiguity here stems from the fact that 'real' and 'nominal' *islām* cannot be differentiated in Arabic by giving the letter a capital I, as can be done in English. As shown, it is possible to adhere nominally to the religion of Islam, and enjoy all the benefits that membership of the Muslim community brings, yet still remain without any true belief or firm conviction. Once again, the verse which deals with the superficial acceptance of Islam the religion by the Banū Asad is ample proof of this. However, al-Ṣādiq is correct when he asserts that a believer cannot actually be a believer unless he has made a total submission (*islām, taslīm*) to the truths in which he has come to believe. The tradition makes sense only if al-Ṣādiq has in mind the kind of submission described as *islām* (i.e. with a small *i*); this *islām* may be seen as a perfection of *īmān* and, as such, part of the process of belief itself. It is the kind of submission which should logically lead to the performance of 'good deeds', the main elements of which are the 'pillars of Islam'. It is thus expected that a *muslim* also be a Muslim, but it is by no means a foregone conclusion that a Muslim - however much he prays or fasts - will also be a *muslim* (Here the word *muslim* accords with *islām* and is used to denote true submission, whilst the word Muslim denotes an adherent - nominal or actual - of the religion of Islam.) al-Ṣādiq concludes the narration by saying that Islam precedes *īmān* and constitutes the preliminary to belief. If someone commits a sin - major or minor - he leaves the state of *īmān* but does not leave the state of Islam. If he repents and asks for forgiveness, he will re-enter the state of *īmān*. He will not be considered an unbeliever unless he declares that which is illicit to be licit, and vice-versa: in this case he will leave *īmān* and Islam altogether. This person, according to the tradition, is like one who first enters the *ḥaram* and the *ka'ba*, but then commits a crime and is thrown out of both and then executed.

Shi'ite exegesis: a contemporary view of the question of *īmān* and *islām*

According to 'Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *islām* may be defined in several ways and can be seen to operate on several levels. The lowest level of *islām*, or submission, consists in the 'acceptance of externals', by which may be understood the commands and prohibitions of the religion (*dīn*) of Islam. These are affirmed by declaration of the *shahādātayn*, the act of witnessing which takes place when an individual accepts Islam as his religion. It is this spoken formula which admits one into the fold of Islam and secures membership of the community of Muslims, 'whether or not the heart confirms the tongue'.⁶⁰ To support his assertion that the act of witnessing which renders the individual a Muslim may take place with little or no inner conviction, the 'Allāma cites the already mentioned verse which describes the nominal entrance into Islam of the Banū Asad.

The first stage of *īmān* then follows: this comprises affirmation (*taṣdīq*) by the heart of the concepts enshrined in the *shahādātayn* in what the 'Allāma terms a 'general' (*ijmālī*) manner. At this stage most of the subsidiary (*far'ī*) commands of the religion are translated

into practice. This heralds the second stage of *islām*, wherein the heart 'submits to most of the truths in a deep and comprehensive (*taṣṭīf*) manner'.⁶¹ This stage of submission also engenders acts of righteousness (*a'māl sāliha*), although there may still be faults in the believer and instances in which he strays from the path and commits sins. In order to confirm the existence of a stage of *islām* which comes after the initial stage of *īmān*, and which is different to the nominal submission represented in the verse concerning the Banū Asad, the 'Allāma quotes two other verses, 43:69 and 2:208. The first is one of the verses in which belief in the signs (*āyāt*) of God is stated categorically as preceding submission to God's will;⁶² the second is a command from God to the believers to enter into *islām* wholeheartedly.⁶³

After the second stage of *islām* comes the second stage of *īmān*. This consists of 'deep belief' (*al-īmān al-taṣṭīf*) in all of the truths of Islam. For the 'Allāma, this state is expressed in such verses as 49:15, in which the believers are described as those who have believed in God and His Messenger and have never since doubted.⁶⁴ Also cited is verse 61:11, in which the believers are told to strengthen their belief in God and His prophet and to strive in his cause.⁶⁵ The third stage of *islām* now follows. Having progressed so far, the individual will be able to submit all of his animal appetites, all of those facets of his make-up which are inclined to ephemeral pleasures and worldly allurements, to the will of the Creator. Influenced by his belief, he will begin to worship God as though he were seeing him.⁶⁶ In both his internal and external senses, he will see nothing that is not submitted to its Creator and to the dictates of 'divine decree and determination' (*qadā' wa qadar*). The 'Allāma refers to verse 4:65, in which it is stated that real belief can obtain only when there is the fullest conviction on the part of the believer, and when no resistance is offered against the decisions of God.⁶⁷ Thereupon follows the third stage of *īmān*, crystallised - according to the 'Allāma - in verses 1-11 of *al-Mu'minun* (The Believers). The second and third stages of *islām* are virtually identical since both are characterised by their insistence on submission to the commands of God, which is in turn facilitated by *ridā* (contentment in the face of whatever God decrees), *sabr* (patience), and sincerely motivated acts of righteousness. When a man reaches the third stage of *islām* he has become transmogrified into a totally obedient slave of God, yet it is clear that the mastership of God over His creation is far more meaningful than can be understood from the conventional master-slave relationships obtaining in the human realm. God's ownership, asserts the 'Allāma, is absolute: man is totally dependent upon the Creator for all things and can exercise no independent power or authority over his own essence, attributes or actions. Thus God's power and dominicality cannot be compared with the authority of a human master over his human slave. As man's submission increases, God gradually reveals the reality of the Creator-creature relationship to man. This act of revealing is purely a 'gift of grace' from God: man has no power over the act of revealing and cannot work consciously towards obtaining this gift. The 'Allāma quotes verses concerning the prophet Abraham, who, although having accepted God's legislative (*tashrī'ī*) command to submit, asked at the end of his life for 'submission' for himself and his family.⁶⁸ Since submission is something which, logically, is initiated by the believer, Abraham's plea points to something

which was out of his own hands. This is what the 'Allāma refers to as the fourth stage of *islām*, yet it appears more likely that Abraham's petition was not for a vision in which God's absolute ownership would be revealed, but for the safeguarding of the submission he had already made. The 'Allāma's claim that this stage of submission is a gift from God does not fit in with the understanding of submission as a state which is initiated consciously by the believer. Furthermore, Abraham could have had no clear insight into the level of his family's belief or their eligibility for the kind of vision described by the 'Allāma.

The fourth stage of *īmān* entails the total application of all of the above to all of the situations in which the believer finds himself. Verses 10:62-4 are cited as an illustration of this stage of *īmān*, wherein the believers are aware of their total dependence upon God and realise that no cause can have an effect without the permission of the Creator. This is the stage of *wilāya*, in which the believer is raised to the exalted status of 'friend of God' (*walī Allah*).

From this cursory study of narrations and Quranic exegesis, several facts emerge. Firstly, the fact that *īmān* and *islām* are conceptually different is, in the Shi'ite as in the Sunnite view, quite clear from several Quranic verses. Secondly, the fact that *īmān* is the basis for *islām*/Islam and thus totally fundamental is also a matter for agreement between various Shi'ite and Sunnite scholars, past and present.

There is considerable confusion, however, surrounding the different interpretations of the word *islām*, and an inability - or unwillingness - on the part of certain earlier exegetes to make, as the Quran does, a distinction between personal submission (*islām*) and membership of the communal religion (Islam). As we have seen, this may have been the result of a desire to preserve unity, or a reflection of the belief that in the very earliest Islamic community, all Muslims were also *muslims*. As the community expanded, the possibility that people might profess adherence to the faith purely for the social and material benefits that membership of the community would bestow upon them increased. The case of the Banū Asad is but one example.⁶⁹ In addition, the ambiguity in the use of the word *islām*, which in Arabic cannot be differentiated from the word Islam by the use of capitals as it can in English, tended to blur the distinction between the interior, personal submission of the individual (*islām*) and the formal profession of adherence to the religious community (Islam). Equivocal statements such as those made by Ibn 'Abbās give the impression that *islām* is a question more of birthright than of personal and individual submission.⁷⁰ Equally misleading is the tradition attributed to Ja'far al-Šādiq in which belief is deemed possible only through *islām*. While this may be the case if, by the word *islām*, the personal submission of the individual is intended, it is not true as far as 'Islam' is concerned. In this light, it is not difficult to understand why an individual born into an Islamic environment may consider himself to be a believer merely through affiliation to the Muslim community, and thus, by equating Islam with *īmān*, shift the emphasis that should, according to the Quran, be on the latter to the former. Thus by the sixth century AH, al-Ghazālī was able to berate the Muslim community on the grounds that 'the science of

the path of the Hereafter, which our forefathers trod and which includes what God calls in His Book law, wisdom, knowledge, enlightenment, light, guidance, and righteousness, has vanished from among men and been forgotten completely.⁷¹ And by the twentieth century AD, exegetes such as Rashīd Ridā were able to discount the beliefs of countless fellow Muslims as 'an instrument of partisanship and a means of worldly gain'.⁷²

Given that both *īmān* and *islām*/Islam are supposed to involve a conscious choice⁷³ - and, by implication, knowledge and reason - on the part of the individual, to what extent has the preponderance of Islam over *īmān* affected the way in which the Islamic revelation has been, and is still being, communicated to the masses by Muslim scholars? It is to the question of knowledge, or *ilm*, that we now turn in order to attempt an answer.

The terms *ilm* and *ulamā'*

There have been countless expositions on the nature and function of knowledge (*ilm*) in Islam - more so, probably, than in any other religion - and this is no doubt because of the pre-eminent position and crucial role accorded to knowledge in the Quran.⁷⁴ These expositions, though varied in substance, encompass the nature of knowledge in its entirety. Distinctions have been made between the knowledge of God (*ilm Allah*) and the knowledge of man about God (*ilm bi'llāh*), and religion, and the world, and things sensible and intelligible; and about spiritual knowledge and wisdom. Thus, for example, *ilm* has been understood to mean various things: the received revelation or Quran; the revealed law (*sharī'a*); the *sunna*; Islam; *īmān*; spiritual knowledge (*ilm al-ladunnī*); wisdom (*ḥikma*); gnosis (*irfān*); thought (*tafakkur*); science (to which the plural *ulūm* is applied); and education. Works have been produced on these themes from the very beginning of Islam up until the present day, although the bulk of these writings emerged before the tenth century AH. Such works included exegeses on the Quran, commentaries on the Traditions of the Prophet by compilers of various *ḥadīth* collections; works on law and jurisprudence, and those of other foremost jurists concerned with the elucidation of knowledge and discernment; books on knowledge written by various scholars, savants, sages and imams among both the Sunnites and Shi'ites; treatises by the Mu'tazilites, the theologians, the philosophers and the Sufis; lexicons and dictionaries of technical terminologies in *tasawwuf* and philosophy and the arts and sciences (*al-funūn*) by various grammarians, philologists, scholars and men of letters; and anthologies and other works connected with education and *belles-lettres*. Obviously a comprehensive survey of the literature dealing with the Islamic understanding of the concept of *ilm* is a monumental task, far beyond the scope of this paper. Furthermore, the present study is not concerned with the philosophical or epistemological definition of knowledge;⁷⁵ rather, the aim here is to demonstrate, via a cursory overview of how *ilm* is presented in the Quran and the Traditions, that the term has, for the most part, been stripped of its original meaning. The multiplicity of meanings that the word *ilm* has acquired has had far-reaching consequences for the Muslim masses, not only in the way in which they are guided

religiously', but also as far as political authority is concerned.

The development of disciplines such as the interpretation of the Quran and the Traditions, and the method of application of social, economic and political laws derived from those two sources, was inevitable considering the nature of the Islamic revelation and the practical demands of the Islamic community founded in Medina under the leadership of Muḥammad. Interpretation of the Quran was one of the earliest branches of learning to come into existence. The Iranian 'Abd al-Ridā Hījāzī is of the opinion that during the lifetime of Muḥammad, there was no need for any books or writings dealing with 'Quranic sciences', since anyone who had any questions concerning the Quran and its interpretation had only to ask the Prophet himself.⁷⁶ The Quranic 'sciences' (*'ulūm al-Qur'ān*) developed rapidly after the death of Muḥammad, with many different disciplines coming into existence. The importance attached by the Quran to the acquisition of knowledge, together with the apparent ambiguity of the term *'ilm* itself, gave rise to a wide range of 'sciences', each with a provenance deemed traceable to the Quran itself. Each of the intellectually-oriented members of the community would, according to his personal ability or preference, busy himself with a certain aspect of the revelation. The Prophet's son-in-law, 'Alī b. Abī Tālib - the first Shi'ite Imam - is considered to have been the first person to teach the correct pronunciation and method of recitation of the Quran; this he did by clarifying the rules of Arabic grammar and teaching them to one Abū al-Aswad al-Du'ulī.⁷⁷ The Iranian cleric, 'Allāma Burqā'ī, traces all branches of what he calls 'Islamic science' back to the Quran, and outlines briefly the various aspects of the Book which were focused upon and the disciplines which such attention engendered. Interest in the actual letters and sounds of the revealed words, he says, brought into existence the 'science' of recitation (*'ilm al-tajwīd*), i.e. reading the Quran in accordance with established rules of pronunciation and intonation; some individuals focused on the usage and positioning of words, thus creating the 'science' of grammar and syntax (*'ilm-i sarf wa nahw*); contemplation upon the various styles of writing and copying the Quran led to the flourishing of Islamic calligraphy (*'ilm-i rasm al-khat*); those who pondered the possible meanings of words and phrases paved the way for the 'science' of exegesis (*'ilm al-tafsīr*); those who focused their attention on rational proofs and examples of Divine Unity heralded the foundation of the 'science' of theology (*'ilm al-kalām*); investigation into how rules and regulations necessary for the functioning of social life can be extracted or deduced from the verses of the Quran, the Traditions and the *sunna* led to the birth of the 'science of principles', i.e. the principles of Islamic jurisprudence; contemplation on the lives and achievements of the prophets engendered the 'science' of history (*'ilm al-tārīkh*); the study of those verses in which the Quran discusses the kinds of behaviour that lead to either reward or punishment in the Hereafter brought into being the 'science' of ethics (*'ilm al-akhlāq*); those who deliberated upon the numerous Quranic verses which deal with cosmic phenomena founded the 'natural' sciences and became pioneers in the fields of physics, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, alchemy, geography, and so on.⁷⁹ Burqā'ī's list of what he terms 'Quranic sciences' is extensive; he points out that all of the progress made by Muslim scholars in their various fields in the first centuries of Islam happened as a

result of the Islamic revelation and the emphasis therein on the acquisition of *'ilm*.⁸⁰

The development of the above branches of knowledge did not take place all at once: the formation of each discipline happened gradually, each in accordance with the practical needs of the burgeoning Islamic community. For example, the earliest activity - and the most highly developed intellectual expression - of the Islamic community in its foetal stages was in law rather than in theology; the practical demands of the community necessitated the stabilisation and standardisation of the processes of law long before the need was felt for a formal discipline of theological speculation such as *kalām*.⁸¹ This is not to say that metaphysical matters were not discussed in some form or other during the early days of Islam; indeed, most of the Meccan verses are replete with matters metaphysical, and it is inconceivable that such questions could have gone undiscussed between Muḥammad and the early converts to the new faith. The appearance of formally structured branches of Islamic knowledge or science took place much later than this. Initially, anyone proficient in any of the aforementioned fields would, as 'one who knows', be entitled to be called an *'ālim* (possessor of knowledge) in his own discipline. Yet it appears that in the first few decades after the death of Muḥammad, each scholar was titled according to his own particular field, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, for instance, was, by virtue of his pioneering work in Qurānic exegesis, called *ra'īs al-mufasssīrīn* (lit. 'chief of the exegetes').⁸² It was not until later, when the various branches of knowledge had been structured into more formal disciplines of learning and instruction, that the nebulous term *'ulamā'* came to be used as a blanket expression to cover any group of Muslim scholars, regardless of their specialities. The apparent ambiguity of the term *'ilm* as used in the Quran left the way open for each group of scholars to insist on the necessity of acquiring that particular branch of knowledge which happened to be its field of expertise. According to Muḥammad, the acquisition of knowledge is an ordinance that is obligatory upon every Muslim man and woman; this assertion forms one of the most celebrated prophetic Traditions concerning the question of knowledge, and is accepted by both Sunnites and Shi'ites alike.⁸³ The fact that the Tradition does not specify the type of knowledge to be acquired suggests that in the early days of Islam there was a consensus as to the meaning and connotations of the term *'ilm*. However, as Ghazālī points out in *Ihyā' ulūm al-dīn*, Muslim scholars later disagreed as to exactly which branch of knowledge a Muslim is to acquire. As a result, he says, they split into approximately twenty different groups.⁸⁴ The scholastic theologians (*mutakallimūn*) insisted that *kalām* was obligatory since it is through this discipline that the Unity of God, His Essence and Attributes, can be demonstrated logically; the jurists (*fuqahā'*) insisted on *fiqh* because the lawful, unlawful, forbidden and permissible things of everyday life and worship are determined through it; the exegetes (*mufasssīrūn*) and traditionists (*muhaddithūn*) stood for *tafsīr* and *ḥadīth*, claiming that it is only through these two sources that all other sciences can be reached; the Sufis pointed to Sufism as the obligatory branch of knowledge, and so on. In this way, as Ghazālī asserts, each group was able to elevate its own particular specialisation to the status of the obligatory knowledge intended in the prophetic Tradition quoted above.⁸⁵

The terms '*ilm*' and '*ulamā*' in Sunnite and Shi'ite Traditions

Apart from the extensive use of the word '*ilm*' and its derivatives in the Quran, there are numerous Traditions narrated from Muḥammad and his companions on the question of knowledge in both Shi'ite and Sunnite sources. A study of the Quranic usage of the term '*ilm*' will follow on at the end of this paper, so that the discrepancy which exists between its usage in the Quran and the interpretation of various Muslim scholars may appear more clearly.

In the body of sayings attributed to Muḥammad - and, for the Shi'ites, the Imams - there can be found hundreds of Traditions concerning the question of knowledge and the excellence of those who acquire and disseminate it. Some of these sayings are so well known among Muslims that they have crossed over into everyday language as proverbs or maxims. Sayings such as 'Seek knowledge, even though it be in China,'⁸⁶ and 'I (Muḥammad) am the city of knowledge and 'Alī is its gateway'⁸⁷ have been incorporated into many works of literature and poetry, the Tradition, 'The acquisition of knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim man and woman'⁸⁸ was even one of the slogans used by Iran's Reza Shah in his education reform programme of the 1930s. According to the Traditions, whosoever treads the path towards the acquisition of '*ilm*' will be placed on the road to Heaven by God;⁸⁹ those with knowledge ('*ulamā*') are the custodians (*amanā*) of religion;⁹⁰ the '*ulamā*' are the inheritors of the prophets;⁹¹ one with knowledge (*'ālim*) who benefits from that knowledge is better in the sight of God than 70,000 devotees (*'ābid*);⁹² to behold the face of one with knowledge (*'ālim*) is an act of worship;⁹³ he who acquires knowledge, acts upon it and imparts it to others only to please Allah is proclaimed as victorious and magnificent by all beings that exist throughout the realms of the heavens;⁹⁴ knowledge is man's hope of immortal life, and so on. Most of the Traditions in both Shi'ite and Sunnite *ḥadīth* compilations do not clarify whether the term '*ilm*' is to be understood as a specific branch of knowledge or not. However, in two major works of *ḥadīth* - Kulaynī's *al-Kāfī* for the Shi'ites and Bukhari's *Ṣaḥīḥ* for the Sunnites - there are sections which deal specifically with the transmission of Traditions. The seventeenth chapter of *al-Kāfī* deals solely with the transmission of Traditions, without the term '*ilm*' being used once.⁹⁵ Yet the fact that this and a further five chapters at the end of Kulaynī's *Kitāb-i faḍl al-'ilm* deal almost exclusively with the transmission, learning and teaching of narrations and are included under the title of '*ilm*' points to the fact that the traditionists saw themselves as '*ulamā*' and were thus predisposed to interpreting '*ilm*' as '*ilm al-ḥadīth*' (science of Traditions). In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, the implication is more explicit: the term *ahl al-'ilm* is interpreted by the compiler as denoting the *mujtahidūn*, those who exert themselves in the field of independent judgement, which at the time of Bukhari meant the *muhaddithūn*, the transmitters and interpreters of Traditions.⁹⁶

There are certain Traditions in which the actual meaning of the word '*ilm*' is expounded either by the Prophet or the Imams. One such example is a narration known as

the *ḥadīth al-tathlīth* (lit. 'the trinity Tradition') Muḥammad was once asked to define the term *ʿilm*, he answered by saying that it consists of three things *āya muḥkama*, *farīda ʿādila*, and *sunna qāʾima*. The problem here is one of interpretation. Knowledge of *āya muḥkama* (lit. 'sound signs' or 'sound verses') can be understood to be the knowledge of those verses in the Quran whose meanings are precise and unequivocal, knowledge of *farīda ʿādila* (lit. 'just obligations') can be taken as implying the knowledge of obligatory acts to be performed by Muslims in everyday life; knowledge of *sunna qāʾima* (lit. 'upright code') can be understood as knowledge of the Mohammedan *sunna* or code of Islamic imperatives and prohibitions. As such, all three sub-divisions would fall into the domain of 'scriptural' sciences such as *fiqh* and *ḥadīth*. The Iranian scholar Sayyid Muḥammad Rīzvi, a contemporary translator of al-Kāfī into English, has interpreted the tradition in this way.⁹⁷ Mohammed Fayd al-Kāshānī, a prominent Shīʿite of the middle Safavid period, has, on the other hand, interpreted the Tradition differently. Kāshānī interprets *āya muḥkama* as referring to the principles of belief (*uṣūl al-aqāʾid*), *farīda ʿādila* as referring to ethics and morals (*ʿilm al-akhlāq*); and *sunna qāʾima* as referring to *fiqh*.⁹⁸ Mīr Dāmād, another Safavid scholar, interprets *āya muḥkama* as 'major jurisprudence' (*fiqh al-akbār*); *farīda ʿādila* as 'minor jurisprudence' (*fiqh al-asghar*), and *sunna qāʾima* as the knowledge of ethics and morals.⁹⁹ The basic problem with Traditions and narrations is one of interpretation, a problem that is exacerbated by the fact that there can often be found several different versions of the same narration in different sources. In this sense, the interpretation of Traditions is far more problematic than the exegesis of the Quran. As far as the Traditions concerning *ʿilm* are concerned, the vast majority do not specify the actual meaning of the word *ʿilm* and thus it becomes open to each group of scholars to interpret them as it wishes. Kāshānī, for example, who was inclined towards the 'esoteric', sees the Tradition in question as focusing on the fundamentals of belief, whereas it would be equally as feasible for an expert in the exoteric or 'scriptural' sciences, i.e. *fiqh* and *ḥadīth*, to interpret the Tradition according to his own criteria and in favour of his own branch of knowledge.¹⁰⁰

Changes in the meaning of the terms *ʿilm* and *fiqh*

ʿilm is the broadest word in the Arabic language for knowledge. It is often equated with *maʿrifa* or *shuʿūr*, but there are marked distinctions in its usage.¹⁰¹ The verb *ʿalima* (to know) covers one or two accusatives as it indicates knowledge of a thing or a proposition, as in the German *kennen* or *wissen*. In its early usage, *ʿilm* was the knowledge of definite things such as the Quran, *ḥadīth*, *sharīʿa* and so on, as we have seen in the preceding section on *ḥadīth* collections. *fiqh*, however, was used originally to mean the independent use of the intellect as a means of acquiring knowledge, but the word *faqīh* (one who is intelligent or knowing) has since come to indicate a minor canon lawyer or jurist: the *faqīh* is one who is able, through independent use of his intelligence, to decide points of law by his own judgement in the absence or ignorance of a Tradition bearing on the case in question. In the older theological language, *fiqh* was contrasted with *ʿilm* which, besides

knowledge of definite things such as the Quran and *tafsīr*, had come to denote the accurate knowledge of legal decisions handed down by the Prophet and his companions. *ʿilm* and *fiqh* were considered to be distinct qualities of the theologian; al-Mujāhid defines the sum total of all wisdom as being composed of '*al-Qurʾān, al-ʿilm wa al-fiqh*'¹⁰² al-Mujāhid's definition limits the application of the terms to two well-defined areas of scriptural knowledge, thus showing clearly that by his time, considerable changes in meaning had occurred. The fact that the word *ʿālim* may also be applied - in its broadest sense - to denote one who is proficient in *fiqh* means that a *faqīh* could easily be referred to as an *ʿālim*, thus fusing the two terms together. The gradual broadening of the word *ʿilm* - as was demonstrated in the previous section - to any of the so-called Quranic sciences, meant that the word *ʿālim* could be used to denote any scholar in the widest sense of the word.

Against these gradual changes in meaning there have been vigorous protests made by many Muslim thinkers, the most notable being Ghazālī. Ghazālī does not believe that the praise given in the Quran to the '*ulamāʾ*' can apply to mere canon lawyers or jurists.

Ghazālī lists five branches of knowledge - all of which he classifies as praiseworthy (*maḥmūd*) - which had undergone a transformation in meaning by his lifetime. These are *fiqh*, *ʿilm*, *tawḥīd*, *ḥikma* and *tafsīr*. *fiqh*, which by Ghazālī's time had become established as jurisprudence, was claimed by him to have been changed by 'limitation' (*tahdīd*). Whereas *fiqh* originally meant 'discernment of the Truth', it was subsequently limited to 'the knowledge of unusual legal cases, the mastery of the minute details of their origins, excessive disputation on them, and the retention of the different opinions which relate to them.'¹⁰³ Ghazālī states that as far as the Quran is concerned, the term *fiqh* was applied to the 'science of the Hereafter and the knowledge of the subtle defects of the soul, the influences which render works corrupt, the thorough realization of the inferiority of this worldly life, the urgent expectation of bliss in the Hereafter, and the domination of fear (of God) over the heart.'¹⁰⁴ Ghazālī cites a verse in the Quran in which the believers are told that whenever they embark upon a fighting expedition, they should leave behind a contingent of individuals who will busy themselves with *tafaqquh* so that they may admonish the fighters on their return. *fiqh*, then, according to Ghazālī, is that which brings about such a warning and such a fear, not the 'details of ordinary divorce or divorce through *liʾān*, or manumission (*ʿataq*), *salām* contracts, and hire, rental and lease (*ijāra*) conditions, which are the domain of jurisprudence and produce neither warning nor fear.'¹⁰⁵ Ghazālī asserts that one who devotes himself exclusively to the affairs of jurisprudence actually serves to harden his heart and remove from it the kind of fear which should be a result of *fiqh* in its original sense. In verse 7:179, the Quran states that those who are destined for hell have 'hearts which do not understand' (*lahum qulūb lā yafqahūn*); in Ghazālī's opinion, the understanding meant by the Quran is concerned with belief and not with legal opinions.

ʿAllāma Ṭabāṭabāʾī confirms Ghazālī's statements on the corruption of the term *fiqh*; in his interpretation of verse 9:122 he says that the true meaning of the word

tafaqquh is the understanding (*fahm*) of 'all religious knowledge (*ma'ārif-i dīnī*), both fundamental (*'uṣūl*) and secondary (*furū'*). He adds that the term *fiqh* cannot be limited to the knowledge of the 'practical rules' (*aḥkām-i 'amālī*) of religion, i.e. *fiqh*, as it has been by the Muslim '*ulamā'* in the past.¹⁰⁶

Ghazālī does not go so far as to say that the term *fiqh* cannot be applied to the independently reached decisions of jurists on points of Islamic law, but rather emphasises that the term was applied originally to the 'science of the Hereafter', the restriction that took place in the term caused ambiguity which, he argues, caused some men to devote themselves solely to jurisprudence, thus neglecting the science of the Hereafter and the nature of the soul and the heart. The type of 'esoteric' knowledge facilitated by *fiqh* (in its original sense) is abstruse and difficult to live by; furthermore, to attain through it candidacy for office or a position of power, prestige and wealth, is simply not possible. For this reason, Ghazālī says, Satan used the change in the term *fiqh* to 'make the neglect of the science of the Hereafter, and the alteration in the connotation of the term, attractive and pleasing to the human heart.'¹⁰⁷

Clearly, while Ghazālī condemns the misuse of the term *fiqh*, he does not deny that jurisprudence has its place in Islamic society. However, he states that it is a branch of knowledge that is *fard al-kifāya*, i.e. its acquisition is of merit but not obligatory: so long as at least one person in the community is versed in the science of jurisprudence, the obligation to acquire that knowledge ceases to be binding on the rest of the community, who are then supposed to practise *taqlīd* or 'imitation' of the most eminent jurisprudence in their midst.¹⁰⁸ According to Ghazālī, jurisprudence is connected with religion only indirectly: since this world is the preparation for the Hereafter, it is the fundamentals of belief which are its foundation. The regulation of social life and the manner of government are secondary - albeit indispensable - adjuncts to the fundamentals of belief, and it is the regulation of social life and government, with its myriad laws and rules, that forms the domain of the jurist. The heart is removed from this domain, since attention is focused only on the outward confession (i.e. Islam) and not on the inward intention.¹⁰⁹ Concerning prayer, for example, the jurist is entitled to give his opinion as to whether or not it has been performed correctly in accordance with the prescribed regulations, but is unable to pass judgement regarding the inner intentions of the worshipper. The jurist, claims Ghazālī, is proficient in a branch of knowledge which relates to the welfare of the believer in this world. Were one to ask a jurist about divorce, or inheritance, or gambling, he would probably be able to recite volumes of minute details concerning these matters, most of which would never be used or needed; however, were one to ask the same jurist about sincerity (*ikhlas*) or the nature of hypocrisy (*riyā* or *nifāq*), he would hesitate to express an opinion, even though the knowledge of such matters is an obligatory ordinance, the neglect of which brings about damnation in the Hereafter.¹¹⁰ A study of Ghazālī's *Ihyā* shows that, by his time, the proliferation of jurists was such that 'the town is crowded with those who are employed in giving legal opinions and defending cases.'¹¹¹ Ghazālī expresses shock at the fact that some *fard al-kifāya* activities - most notably jurisprudence - are preferred to other fields of *fard al-kifāya* science such as medicine. He says that the

reason could be that disciplines such as medicine 'do not lead to the management of religious endowments (*awqāf*), execution of wills, possession of the money of orphans, and appointment to judicial and governmental positions through which one exalts himself above his fellow men and fastens his yoke upon his enemies.'¹¹² Ghazālī's vitriol is reserved, clearly, not for the science of jurisprudence *per se*; indeed he goes to great lengths to extol early jurists and scholars of the scriptural sciences such as al-Shāfi'ī and Ahmad b. Hanbal, who were not only pious but also quick to recognise the excellence of those versed in the esoteric sciences.¹¹³ Ghazālī's attack is aimed at those individuals who were able to exploit the discipline of jurisprudence for their own ends. Confusion over the term *islām*/Islam, which, as we have already seen, results in inordinate emphasis placed on externals, facilitates further the popularity of the *fiqh*, as al-Attas says, the preoccupation with the Islamic state and the *umma* in modern times is another indication of the exaggerated estimation accorded to the acquisition of *fard al-kifāya* knowledge such as jurisprudence. The gradual domination of the Islamic sciences by the jurists - so berated by Ghazālī - cannot be seen solely as the machinations of 'learned men who have espoused evil,' as Ghazālī puts it; rather, we can understand it in the somewhat crude terms of supply and demand. The majority of Muslims inclined towards Islam rather than *islām*, thus creating a demand for scholars dealing with externals rather than belief. Traditionally, this demand has been met by the experts in *fiqh* (in the sense of jurisprudence), the *fuqahā'*

As far as the term '*ilm*' is concerned, Ghazālī bemoans the change in meaning that it too had undergone by his lifetime. Originally, '*ilm*' was applied to man's knowledge of God, His miracles, and His works among His servants and creatures. However, the true meaning of the term came to be altered - as in the case of the word *fiqh* - by limitation, until it became more commonly applied to those who debate cases of jurisprudence. Ghazālī argues that most of what is said in the Quran and Traditions concerning '*ilm*' relates to those who have knowledge of God, His ordinances, His works and His attributes. The change in meaning, together with the fact that '*ilm*' and *fiqh* became virtually coterminous, resulted in the term '*ulamā'*' being applied to many who were ignorant of the true Quranic sciences of *tafsīr* and *ḥadīth*, but who were well versed in casuistry and were thus in a position to parade before the masses as 'versatile, learned men.'¹¹⁴ From Ghazālī's comments it is clear that for him, '*ilm*' can be perceived on two different yet complementary levels. First and foremost, '*ilm*' signifies man's knowledge of God and His attributes, etc. Secondly, the term can be applied to any one of the disciplines which sprang up as a result of the Islamic revelation, such as exegesis and the transmission of Traditions. What Ghazālī objects to most vehemently is the limitation of the word '*ilm*' to any one particular branch of knowledge and learning. Not only is limitation detrimental to the offending scholars and their followers - the Muslim masses - but it also reveals neglect on their part of the most fundamental knowledge, i.e. the knowledge of God, without which all other disciplines are ultimately worthless. 'Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī holds similar views. In his interpretation of Quranic verses in which the terms '*ilm*' and *īmān*' occur side by side, he says:

It is clear that the meaning of *'ilm* and *īmān* in these verses denotes conviction (*yaqīn*) and adherence to those things which conviction necessitates. The word *'ilm* when used in the Quran means certainty of knowledge regarding God and His signs, while *īmān* signifies belief in the incumbency of those things which such knowledge necessitates.¹¹⁵

Both Shi'ite and Sunnite schools in theory hold that *'ilm* is a prerequisite of *īmān*. Thus it can be understood that what is intended fundamentally by the term *'ilm* cannot be limited to any one particular branch of knowledge; rather, it must refer to man's knowledge of God. In his commentary on a narration attributed to Ja'far al-Sādiq, the Iranian scholar 'Alī Tihirānī points out that belief in the realities of *tawhīd* (Divine unity) cannot be attained without deliberation (*tafakkur*) and proofs based on knowledge (*barāhin-i 'ilmī*); whilst there can exist knowledge without belief, there can never be belief without knowledge. Belief has different levels and can be strengthened only in accordance with the amount of effort spent on thought, deliberation and the acquisition of knowledge. Tihirānī also explains that the intellectual perception of the existence of God, the validity of the messengership of Muḥammad, and other fundamentals of belief do not necessarily culminate in belief:

Knowledge and perception are products of the intellect (*'aql*), whereas belief is the product of the heart (*qalb*)...Satan was well-versed in all of the fundamentals of belief but was still branded an infidel by God. A philosopher too may explain at great length all the rational proofs for the existence of God yet still not believe, since his knowledge does not rise above his intellect...intellectual knowledge of the unity of God (*tawhīd-i 'ilmī*) must be translated into acceptance of the heart (*tawhīd-i qalbī*).¹¹⁶

Common understanding of the terms *'ilm* and *'ulamā'*

Ghazālī's objection that the term *'ilm* had, by his time, undergone a transformation in meaning and had come to denote any kind of Muslim scholar - the jurist in particular - is still valid today. Throughout the Islamic world it is the *mujtahid*, the *mullā* and the *mufīd* - all renowned chiefly for their prowess in the scriptural sciences - who are revered by the majority of Muslims as *'ulamā'*. Naturally there are individuals - mostly scholars themselves such as Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Tihirānī and al-Attas, - who draw careful distinctions between the various kinds of knowledge and emphasise that the fundamental type of *'ilm* is that which involves the recognition of, and belief in, God. In the context of Shi'ite Iran in particular it was not until the turn of the present century that the meaning of the terms *'ilm* and *'ulamā'* were reconsidered in intellectual circles. Until then, the terms were used unequivocally to denote 'religious' knowledge (i.e. the scriptural disciplines) and those proficient in them. However, with the success of the industrial revolution and the rapid progress of all branches of natural science and technology in the West, plus the

overwhelming influence that these developments had on the world of Islam, which had hitherto limited its perception of the concept of *ilm* mainly to the scriptural disciplines, the term *ilm* was broadened once more to denote 'natural science' and *al-ʿulūm* to mean 'the sciences'. Reformist movements throughout the Muslim world took great pains to prove that scientific progress is not only reconcilable with the precepts of Islam but also predated by them. Whether the sole intention of the major reformers was to make the acceptance of science - and, in particular, science as spearheaded by the West - palatable to the taste of the Muslim masses is a matter for speculation. If the desired effect was to free the concept of *ilm* from the monopoly of the jurists, the reformists were, to an extent, successful. Muslim thinkers did indeed begin to reappraise the term *ilm*, but instead of reuniting it with its original meaning as understood by the likes of Ghazālī and Ṭabāṭabāʾī, for the most part all that they did was to exchange one limited interpretation for another. A distinction between 'religious' and 'secular' sciences - where 'religious' denotes the scriptural sciences (*fiqh*, *ḥadīth* etc.), and 'secular' the natural sciences - was highlighted, even though the Quran admits of no such differentiation. If *ilm* had been limited - albeit erroneously - to the study of jurisprudence, it was now limited to the study of science in the Western sense of the term. Much has since been written by Muslims extolling the virtues of modern science and endeavouring to prove, as the early reformers did, that 'science' and 'religion' (*ilm wa dīn*) are compatible.

The term *ilm* in the writings of contemporary Muslim scholars

The general trend among contemporary Muslim writers is to show that the term *ilm* as used in the Quran and Traditions is not confined to 'religious' knowledge but rather that it denotes the concept of knowledge in its widest sense. More particularly, their emphasis is upon the compatibility of modern science with the teachings of the Quran; numerous works on this theme have been authored by Muslim thinkers throughout the Islamic world.¹¹⁷

In *The Rights of Women in Islam*, Shaykh Yaḥyā Nūrī mentions the Quranic emphasis upon the acquisition of scientific knowledge as 'one of the greatest virtues of Islam.' The Quran encourages all men to learn and teach, thus raising the acquisition of knowledge to the status of obligation.¹¹⁸ Nūrī does not specify the type of knowledge adumbrated by the Quran, but since his tract is an apologetic one in defence of the Islamic view of women it may be understood that it is the acquisition of science that he is inferring rather than that of *fiqh* or *ḥadīth* or, even, of God. In other similar works on the position of women in Islam, the objections raised by critics of Islam's stance *vis-à-vis* women are countered with references to the Quranic emphasis on learning, education and the acquisition of knowledge.¹¹⁹

The late Iranian sociologist and revolutionary figurehead ʿAlī Shariʿatī gives several different opinions on the question of *ilm*. In his work *Islāmshināsī*, he states that the meaning of the term *ilm* is general and cannot be limited to what he calls the 'religious sciences':

Some Muslims have endeavoured to limit the word *'ilm* as used in the Quran to the domain of religious knowledge or jurisprudence. In actual fact, the word *'ilm* is used in a general sense. This is clear from prophetic Traditions such as 'Seek knowledge, even though it be as far away as China.'¹²⁰

In another, earlier work, Fāṭima Fāṭima Asṭ, Shari'atī had painted a different picture of the terms *'ilm* and *'ulamā'*, adopting a position akin to that of Ghazālī:

In Islam, the *'ālim* is not an uncommitted individual who happens to have lots of knowledge and knows lots of things. *'ilm*, in the mind of the true *'ālim*, is not merely a mish-mash of facts and information; in his heart it is like a ray of light...the light of God.¹²¹

Shari'atī goes on to say that the *'ilm* of the true *'ālim* is not something secret or mysterious or supernatural; nor can it be confined to specific fields such as history, geography, chemistry, jurisprudence, and so on. These, according to Shari'atī, are 'scientific facts' and not 'light'. The *'ilm* which brings guidance is the *'ilm* of belief (*'aqīda*) which is called *fiqh* in the Quran, although *fiqh* today means knowledge of Islamic social laws and contracts.¹²²

In a later work, however, Shari'atī denounces the view he espoused in *Islāmshināsi* as erroneous, one that is more in keeping with the views of the 'modernists' (*mutajaddidūn*). Quoting the Tradition of Muḥammad which extols the ink of those with knowledge over the blood of martyrs, Shari'atī asserts that the term *'ilm* cannot be understood in a general sense. Nor, he declares, can it be understood as the 'ancients' (*qudamā'*) understood it, namely as being restricted to one particular field. For Shari'atī, the trust (*amāna*) that was given to man by God was one of responsibility; the greatest responsibility rests on the shoulders of the *'ālim*. The kind of *'ilm* envisaged by the Quran, he says, is that knowledge which is in the possession of the 'enlightened intellectual' (*rawshanfīkr*) and should be understood in the framework of modern, popular and revolutionary ideology.¹²³

Murtadā Mutahharī, in his book *Insān wa ṭmān*, points out the contradiction between *'ilm* and belief in the Old Testament, and divides the history of Western civilisation into two main periods: the 'age of belief' and the 'age of *'ilm*'.

Islamic civilisation can also be divided into two eras: the age of 'blossoming glory', i.e. the age of *ṭmān* and *'ilm*, and the age of decline, i.e. the death of *ṭmān* and *'ilm*.¹²⁴

Defining the term *‘ilm*, he concludes that it is:

Man's comprehensive and all-embracing view of the world: the result of mankind's collective efforts which have developed over the centuries. This view, which has been tempered by rules, conditions, laws and a language and logic peculiar to itself, is what is known as *‘ilm* (i.e. science).¹²⁵

Furthermore, he concludes that 'history, the natural sciences, and the study of the human psyche' are the branches of science deemed most useful for man by the Quran.¹²⁶

In the view of the late Mahdī Bāzargān, *‘ilm* cannot be restricted to any one subject and must be understood in the widest sense possible. According to him, *‘ilm* must be like a just judge: free, impartial, and with the sole aim of seeking the truth. Bāzargān mirrors Ghazālī's objection that each group of scholars has limited the term *‘ilm* to that group's own particular field. However, he adds:

God gave to man the 'knowledge of the names'; the Quran does not say 'The knowledge of God, or of things celestial (*malakūtī*)...'; rather, the knowledge was of things which are named...it is the type of knowledge which takes the suffix '-ology' (e.g. biology, geology, sociology etc.), and cannot be restricted to any one field.¹²⁷

The Iraqi Shi'ite scholar Muḥammad Bāqir Ṣadr also equates *‘ilm* with modern science, pointing out that the Quran discusses many phenomena which have only recently been understood in Western scientific milieux.¹²⁸ Similar views are offered by ‘Allāma Maḥmūd Shaltūt, who states that *‘ilm* cannot be limited to 'religious knowledge' and should be understood only in terms of knowledge of the physical realm of creation.¹²⁹

A study of Quranic *āyāt* and conclusion

According to the Quran, the acquisition of knowledge begins with the act of contemplation (*tafakkur*) upon the signs (*āyāt*) of God. The cosmos is perceived to be a vast showcase in which these signs are revealed to man by the Creator; with the wise use of reason (*ta‘aql*), man gains knowledge of these signs and thus in turn gains knowledge of God, the revealer of the signs. Both *tafakkur* and *ta‘aql* are prescribed emphatically in numerous Quranic verses, with the Quran asserting that unbelief and blasphemy are the result of man's failure to use his innate ability to read the signs in the cosmos. The creation of the heavens and the earth; the alternation of night and day; the sailing of ships upon the oceans; rain, winds and clouds; animals, vegetation and fruits; the celestial bodies; the existence of different colours; the creation of men and women and the inherent differences between them; the growth of the foetus in the womb; the prophets and their histories; the fate of past civilizations; the life of Muḥammad and the circumstances surrounding his prophethood - all of these are depicted as 'signs' for men to ponder and approach with the correct use of their ability to reason. Man is enjoined to travel through the land in order

that he may learn wisdom; upon those who will not understand, God shall place doubt, and neither signs nor warnings shall benefit them if they do not believe as a result of their unwillingness to understand. Whoever ignores the 'signs' is the oppressor of his own soul; he who 'reads' the signs but then rejects them will be punished.

The verses on *tafakkur* and *tafaqul* show that the act of contemplation is enjoined on man in order that he may gain knowledge ('ilm) of the signs, and by so doing come to realise that they are created and must be attributed to an omnipotent Creator. In the Quranic schema, therefore, contemplation precedes knowledge and belief. Yet believers too are ordered to make continuous *tafakkur* and *tafaqul*, which serve to sustain and increase belief and conviction. Indeed, numerous verses address those who already believe, encouraging them to continue contemplating the signs.

The knowledge gained through contemplation of the cosmos is considered worthless unless it leads to true and constantly renewed belief in the Creator. One may have knowledge of the signs yet not wish to attribute them to God. Knowledge which is not supplemented and perfected by belief, such as that in the possession of Pharaoh or Satan, is of no use and will be punished with hellfire. In the hands of evil men, knowledge may be dangerous, for knowledge of the 'signs' is of profit only if it is used as a means with which to know God. That the Quran does use the term 'ilm to denote knowledge of things and facts is borne out by verses such as 10:5, in which it is written that Allah created the sun and the moon and their various stages so that man might 'know the number of years and the count of time.' Yet the emphasis remains always on the assertion that knowledge about created things is of value only on the condition that it leads to, or strengthens, belief in God.

The evolution of the Islamic sciences enumerated earlier was sanctioned by the Quranic emphasis on contemplation and the acquisition of 'ilm, but nowhere in the Quran can a verse be found which restricts knowledge to any one field or discipline. In fact, the Quran sees all knowledge of things, i.e. of the cosmos, as a means to an end, and not something that is to be pursued for its own sake. Indeed, the Quran declares quite categorically that the only men who fear God are 'those who know' ('ulamā'), which obviously excludes those who pursue the knowledge of a thing for its own sake, i.e. without contemplating it consciously in order to gain knowledge about, and belief in, its Creator.

Those truly fear God, among His servants, who have knowledge: for God is Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving. (Quran, 35:28)

The use of the word 'ulamā' in this verse can, according to Ghazālī, denote only those who are convinced of the existence of God and all His attributes; he adds that the 'goal of the science of practical religion is revelation, and the goal of revelation is to know God.' Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī interprets the above verse in a similar fashion, concluding that the 'ulamā' are those who know God by His names and attributes and acts; theirs is a

complete knowledge which bestows tranquillity upon their hearts and wipes all doubt from their souls.

Thus the appropriation of the terms '*ilm*' and '*ulamā*' by Muslim scholars, past and present, to describe one particular branch of learning to the exclusion of others, has no Quranic justification. True '*ilm*' is not the knowledge of *fiqh* and *ḥadīth* as the 'founding fathers' insisted; nor is it, as the modernists would have it, twentieth-century science and the study of nature. Following the argument of the Quran to its logical conclusion, we may say that while, for example, an *ʿālim* (in the Quranic sense of the word, i.e. one who knows God) may also be, say, a *faqīh* (in the corrupted sense of the word, i.e. one who is versed in jurisprudence), the reverse may not always be so. Consequently, a *faqīh* may possess no real knowledge ('*ilm*') about God whatsoever.

NOTES

1. For a concise historical study of the development of Islamic theological speculation, see: W. Montgomery Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology* (Edinburgh, EUP, 1979). Pages 32-5 deal specifically with the Murji'ite sect.
2. Numerous Quranic verses present the universe and all that it contains as 'signs' or pointers to the existence and dominicality of God; many of these verses end with one or more of the 'beautiful names' ('*asmā' al-ḥusnā*') of Allah, thus inferring that contemplation of the cosmos has, or should have, as its direct corollary the attribution of the cosmos, as an act of creation, to the Deity.
3. *kafara* means to cover or hide something, and therefore by extrapolation connotes the state of one who does not attribute the cosmos to a Creator. For a more concept of *kufi*, see the article in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition.
4. See: 'Ali Shari'ati, *Pidar, mādar, mā muttahi-īm* (Tehran, 1976). Shari'ati's highly polemical tract is levelled against the blind imitation of Islam by what he believes to be the majority of Muslims, for whom rite and ritual are equated automatically with belief. See also: Rashīd Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-manār* (Cairo, 1367-75) for a Sunnite view of the same question; and: W. Cantwell Smith, 'The Special Case of Islam' in *The Meaning and End of Religion* (New York, 1964), pp. 75-108.
5. Syed Muḥammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Islam, Secularism and the Philosophy of the Future* (London, Mansell Publishing, 1985), p. 112.
6. *fard al-kifāya* describes an act of practice that is obligatory for some Muslims only, in contrast with *fard al-'ayn*, which is obligatory for all Muslims.
7. Verses 30:20-27 and 16:65-70, among others. There are approximately 400 references to 'signs' in the Quran, the majority of which deal with belief or unbelief in God's *āyāt*.
8. Verse 29:35 - 'And We have left thereof an evident Sign, for any people who (care to understand).'
9. Sayyid 'Ali Ḥusayni Khamini'i, *Tarḥ-i kullī-i andīsha-i islāmī dar Qur'ān* (Tehran, 1354 Sh./1975-76), p. 11.
10. *ibid.*, p. 15.
11. Verse 2:285 mentions four: Allah, angels, books and prophets. Verse 4:136 mentions all of the above plus the day of judgement.
12. Verse 8:2 - 'For, Believers are those who, when God is mentioned, feel a tremor in their hearts, and when they hear His Signs rehearsed, find their faith strengthened, and put (all) their trust in their Lord.'
13. Verse 8:4 - 'Such in truth are the Believers: they have grades of dignity with their Lord, and forgiveness, and generous sustenance.'
14. Islam holds that God's creative act is beyond time and space, that the cosmos is being renewed constantly at each instant, and the signs (*āyāt*) of God are being revealed incessantly in new forms and modes. The Quranic basis for this belief comes from verse 50:29 - 'Every day in (new) splendour doth He (shine).' See also: Ṣadr al-dīn al-Shīrāzī, *al-Asfār al-arba'a*, ed. by Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar (Tehran, 1378/1958-59), vol. 1, part 1, p. 116 and vol. 1, part 2, p. 314.

15. Verse 3: 191 - 'Men who celebrate (*dhikr*) the praises of God, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth, (with the thought): "Our Lord! Not for naught hast Thou created (all) this! Glory to Thee! Give us salvation from the fire "'
16. Verse 4: 136 - 'O ye who believe! Believe in God and His Apostle, and the scripture which He hath sent to His Apostle and the scripture which He sent to those before (him). Any who denieth God, His Angels, His books, His Apostles, and the Day of Judgement, hath gone far, far astray.'
17. There are 67 verses in which *ṣalāt* (canonical prayer) is mentioned, with 32 verses for *zakāt* (religious taxes), 9 for *hajj* (pilgrimage) and 7 for *ṣawm* (fasting).
18. Verse 9:71 - 'The Believers, men and women, are protectors, one of another: they enjoin what is just and forbid what is evil; they observe regular prayers, practise regular charity, and obey God and His Apostle. On them will God pour His mercy: for God is exalted in power, Wise.'
19. *aslama* also embraces such meanings as: to forsake, leave, desert, give up, betray; to let sink, drop; to hand over, turn over; to leave, abandon, deliver up, surrender; to commit oneself; to declare oneself committed to the will of God; to become Muslim, embrace Islam. See: Hans Wehr, *Arabic-English Dictionary* (New York, SLS, 1976), pp. 424-5.
20. Verse 4:94 - 'O ye who believe! When ye go abroad in the cause of God, investigate carefully, and say not to anyone who offers you a salutation: "Thou art none of a Believer."'
21. Verse 3:67 - 'Abraham was not a Jew nor yet a Christian; but he was true in faith (*ḥanīf*), and bowed his will to God's, and he joined not gods with God.'
22. Verse 2: 136 - 'Say ye: "We believe in God, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to (all) Prophets from their Lord: we make no difference between one and another of them: and we bow to God."'
23. In verse 10:72, the prophet Noah tells his people that the reward for his preaching to them is from God, for 'I have been commanded to be of those who submit (*muslimūn*) to God's Will.'
24. Verse 2:128 - 'Our Lord! Make of us *muslims*, bowing to Thy (Will), and of our progeny a people *muslim*, bowing to Thy (Will).'
25. Verse 2: 133 - 'Were ye witnesses when Death appeared before Jacob? Behold, he said to his sons: "What will ye worship after me?" They said: "We shall worship thy God and the God of thy fathers, of Abraham, Ismail and Isaac, the One God: to Him we bow (*muslimūn*)."'
26. Verse 12:101 - 'Take Thou my soul (at death) as one submitting (*muslim*) to Thy Will, and unite me with the righteous.'
27. Verse 3: 52 - 'Said the disciples: "We are God's helpers: we believe in God, and do thou bear witness that we are *muslims*."'
28. Verse 2: 112 - 'Nay, - whoever submits his whole self to God and is a doer of good, - we will get his reward with his Lord, on such shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.'
29. Verse 5:4 - 'this day I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.'
30. Sayyid Ḥasan 'Askari, 'Religion and Development' in *The Islamic Quarterly*, vol. 30, no. 2 (1986), p. 79.

31. Verse 2: 208 - 'O ye who believe! Enter into Islam wholeheartedly.' The word *islām* here very likely connotes the personal submission of the self that goes to perfect *imān*. For a concise explanation of the meaning of submission as the perfection of belief, see: Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā'i, *Tafsīr al-mizān* (Tehran, 1364 Sh./1985-86), vol. 1, p. 418. [This work will henceforth be referred to as *al-Mizān*]. See also: Murtaḍā Muṭahhari, *'Adl-i ilāhī* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Islāmī, 1397/1976/1976-77), pp. 350-3.
32. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad* (Cairo, 1313/1895-6), vol. 3, p. 184.
33. See the article entitled *islām* in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edition, vol. 4, p. 172.
34. A. J. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed* (Cambridge: CUP, 1932), p. 194.
35. Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī al-Ash'ari, *Maqālāt al-islāmiyyīn* ed. by 'Abd al-Ḥamīd (Cairo, n.d.), vol. 1, p. 322.
36. L. Gardet, 'Islam' in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edition, vol. 4, p. 172.
37. *ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 173.
38. *ibid.*
39. *ibid.*
40. Kenneth Cragg, *The House of Islam* (Belmont: Dickenson, 1969), p. 5.
41. See note 28.
42. Verse 31:22 - 'Whoever submits his whole self to God, and is a doer of good, has grasped indeed the most trustworthy hand-hold: and with God rests the End and Decision of (all) affairs.'
43. Throughout this paper, the personal and individual submission of a believer is referred to as *islām*, and the communal religion of which he or she is part as Islam. The words *muslim* and Muslim are used accordingly. It is to be hoped that the reader will not be confused unduly by this schema, but will appreciate the subtle difference between the two designations and also the crucial need for a way of distinguishing between them.
44. See note 29 for a translation of this verse.
45. Fakhr al-dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafāṭīḥ al-ghayb* (Istanbul, 1307/1891), vol. 7, pp. 608-9.
46. Rashīd Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-karīm, tafsīr al-manār* (Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Kubrā al-Amūriyya, 1367-75/1948-56), vol. 3, pp. 359-60.
47. The word *al-ṣālihāt* (righteous acts) occurs 62 times in the Quran: on each occasion it is preceded by the phrase 'those who believe', e.g. in verse 2:25 - 'But give glad tidings to those who believe and work acts of righteousness, that their portion is Gardens, beneath which rivers flow...' For a complete list, see: Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, *al-Mu'jam al-mufahris li'alfāz al-Qur'ān al-karīm* (Beirut, 1363/1943-44), pp. 411-12.
48. Jane I. Smith, 'Continuity and Change in the Understanding of *islam*' in *Islamic Quarterly*, vol. 16, no. 3 (1972), pp. 129-30.
49. ibn 'Abbās, *Tanwīr al-miqbās* (Tehran: al-Maktabat al-Islāmiyya, 1377/1957-58), vol. 1, p. 189.
50. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Ja'ir al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān li' tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (Cairo, 1323-29/1900-11), vol. 26, p. 90.
51. Rashīd Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-manār*, vol. 3, p. 358.
52. Verse 61:9 - 'It is He Who has sent His Apostle with guidance and the Religion of Truth, that he may proclaim it over all religions, even though the Pagans may detest (it).'
53. Rashīd Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-manār*, vol. 3, p. 358.

54. Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb al-Kulaynī, *Usūl al-Kāfī*, transl. and ed. by A. A. Khursrawī Shabistārī (Tehran: Kitāb furūshī-i Amīrī, 1351 Sh./1972-73), p. 15.
55. *ibid.*, p. 16. For a clarification of the term *wilāya*, which is used by Shi'ites and Sufis alike, albeit with radically different connotations, see: J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 133-7.
56. 'Alī Shahrīstānī, *Tashayyū'ī 'alawī wa tashayyū'ī safāwī* (Tehran, 1352 Sh./1973-74), p. 62.
57. Kulaynī, *Usūl-al-kāfī*, p. 16.
58. *ibid.*, p. 17.
59. *ibid.*, p. 18.
60. Tabātabā'ī, *al-Mizān*, vol. 1, p. 418.
61. *ibid.*, p. 418.
62. Verse 43:69 - '(Being) those who have believed in Our Signs and bowed (their wills to Ours) in *islām*.'
63. Verse 2:208 - 'O ye who believe! Enter into Islam wholeheartedly, and follow not the footsteps of the Evil One, for he is to you an avowed enemy.'
64. Verse 49:15 - 'Only those are Believers who have believed in God and His apostle, and have never since doubted, but have striven with their belongings and their persons in the cause of God: such are the sincere ones.'
65. Verse 61:11 - 'That ye believe in God and His Apostle, and that ye strive (your utmost) in the cause of God, with your property and your persons: that will be best for you, if ye but knew.'
66. Tabātabā'ī, *al-Mizān*, vol. 1, p. 419.
67. Verse 4:65 - 'But no, by thy Lord, they can have no (real) faith, until they make thee judge in all disputes between them, and find in their souls no resistance against thy decisions, but accept them with the fullest conviction.'
68. Tabātabā'ī, *al-Mizān*, vol. 1, p. 420.
69. See p. 10 of the present study.
70. See p. 15 of the present study.
71. Abū Ḥamīd Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Kitāb al-'ilm*, transl. by N. A. Faris (Lahore: Ashraf Press, 1962), p. 2.
72. See p. 15 of the present study.
73. For example, verse 76:3 - 'We showed him the Way: whether he be grateful or ungrateful (rests on his will).'
74. For an excellent study of the Islamic concept of *'ilm*, see: Franz Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant* (Leiden: Brill, 1970). Rosenthal says that the concept of knowledge has always dominated all aspects of Muslim intellectual, spiritual and social life, and believes that in Islam, knowledge has enjoyed a status unparalleled in other civilisations.
75. See: Fazlur Rahman, *The Philosophy of Mulla Sadra* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975). Pages 200-44 are given over to an appraisal of several Islamic theories of knowledge; the opinions of scholars such as Ṣadrā, Ibn Sīnā, Fakhr al-dīn Rāzī, Fārābī and Suhrawardī are analysed and compared.
76. 'Abd al-Riḍā Hījāzī, *Qur'ān dar ḥuṣr-i faḍā* (Tehran: Kānūn-i Intishārāt, 1354 Sh./1975-76), p. 170.

77. Zālim b. 'Amr Abū al-Aswad al-Du'ulī, died 67/686-67.
78. Cited in: Hijāzī, *Qur'ān dar 'aṣr-i faḍā*, p. 170.
79. Although the Quran itself admits of no difference between 'religious' and 'secular' knowledge, the aforementioned disciplines may be divided into the 'scriptural' and 'non-scriptural': the former denoting fields of study involving the Quran, the Traditions and the derivation of laws therefrom; the latter denoting what in secular terms would be called the 'natural' or 'social' sciences.
80. Sayyid Abū al-Faḍl 'Allāma Burqā'ī, *Muqaddima bar tābishi az Qur'ān* (Tehran, n.d.), pp. 60-1.
81. See: H.A.R. Gibb, *Islam* (Oxford: OUP, 1975) for a lucid and comprehensive outline of the development of various branches of Islamic learning. Chapters 5 and 6 are particularly useful.
82. Hijāzī, *Qur'ān dar 'aṣr-i faḍā*, p. 170.
83. Muḥammad b. Yazid Ibn Māja, *al-Sunan* (Cairo: Dār Ihyā al-Kutub al-'Arabiyya, 1372/1952-53), into., 16:9; Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb al-Kulaynī, *Kitāb faḍl al-'ilm*, transl. by Sayyid Muḥammad Rizvī (Tehran: WOFIS, 1398/1983-84), p. 73.
84. Ghazālī, *Kitāb al-'ilm*, p. 30.
85. *ibid.*, pp. 30-1.
86. *ibid.*, p. 18. See also: Ḥasan Ḥasanzāda 'Āmulī, *Ma'rifat al-nafs* (Tehran: Markaz-i Intishārāt-i 'Ilmī wa Farhangī, 1362 Sh./1983-84), vol. 3, p. 435.
87. Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant*, p. 144.
88. See note 83.
89. Kulaynī, *Kitāb faḍl al-'ilm*, p. 85.
90. *ibid.*, p. 80.
91. *ibid.*, pp. 78-9.
92. *ibid.*, p. 81.
93. Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, *Bihār al-anwār* 2nd edition (Beirut, 1403/1982-83), vol. 1, p. 195. This will henceforth be referred to as *Bihar II*.
94. Kulaynī, *Kitāb faḍl al-'ilm*, p. 88.
95. *ibid.*, pp. 131-7.
96. Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad b. Ismā'il al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Istanbul: Hilal Yayinlari, 1298/1977-78), vol. 9, p. 309.
97. Kulaynī, *Kitāb faḍl al-'ilm*, p. 78.
98. Sayyid Muḥammad Kāzīm 'Asar, *'Ilm al-ḥadīth* (Tehran, 1354 Sh./1975-76), p. 41.
99. *ibid.*, p. 41.
100. A salient example of this would, in the context of Safavid Iran, be 'Allāma Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī (1037-1110); primarily a *muḥaddith* or transmitter of Traditions, Majlisī interpreted '*ilm*' unequivocally as '*ilm al-ḥadīth*', or the 'science' of *ḥadīth* transmission. See my unpublished doctoral thesis: *The Rise of Twelver Shi'ite Externalism in Safavid Iran and its consolidation under 'Allāma Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī* (Durham University, 1989), Chapter IV.

101. *ma'rifa* is 'coming to know by experience or reflection' and implies prior ignorance; thus it cannot be predicated of God's knowledge. *shu'ūr* is perception, especially of details; the *shā'ir* is the perceiver, and also the poet. See the entry on '*ilm*' in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition.
102. Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-hayān*, vol. 3, p. 56.
103. Ghazālī, *Kitāb al-ilm*, p. 80.
104. *ibid.*, p. 80.
105. Verse 9:122 - 'Nor should the believers all go forth together: if a contingent from every expedition remained behind, they could devote themselves to studies in religion (*tafaqquh*), and admonish the people when they return to them, - that thus they (may learn) to guard themselves (against evil).'
106. Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *al-Mizān*, vol. 9, p. 640.
107. Ghazālī, *Kitāb al-ilm*, p. 83.
108. Ruḥullāh Khumaynī, *Tawḍīḥ al-masā'il* (Tehran, 1979), p. 2.
109. Ghazālī, *Kitāb al-ilm*, p. 83.
110. *ibid.*, p. 50.
111. *ibid.*, p. 51.
112. *ibid.*, p. 51.
113. *ibid.*, pp. 59-72.
114. *ibid.*, p. 84.
115. Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *al-Mizān*, vol. 16, p. 325.
116. 'Alī Tihrānī, *Akhlāq-i islāmī* (Mashhad, 1977), vol. 1, p. 68.
117. See, for example: Hijāzī, *Qur'ān dar āsār-i faḍā*, Maurice Bucaille, *La Bible, le Coran et la Science* (Paris: Seghers, 1976); and Yahyā Nazīrī, *Qur'ān wa padīdahā-i ṭabī'at az dīd-i dānish-i imrūz* (Tehran, 1358 Sh./1979-80).
118. Shaykh Yahyā Nūrī, *Huqūq wa ḥudūd-i zan dar Islām* (Tehran, 1340 Sh./1961-62), p. 21.
119. See: Murtaḍā Muṭahharī, *Huqūq-i zan dar Islām* (Tehran, 1357 Sh./1978-79).
120. 'Alī Sharīfātī, *Islāmshināsi* (Mashhad, 1347 Sh./1968-69), pp. 42-3.
121. 'Alī Sharīfātī, *Fāṭima Fāṭima ast* (Tehran, 1336 Sh./1957-58), pp. 40-1.
122. *ibid.*, p. 41.
123. 'Alī Sharīfātī, *Mas'ūliyyat-i shī'ī būdan* (Tehran, 1352 Sh./1973-74), pp. 25-7.
124. Murtaḍā Muṭahhari, *Insān wa islām* (Tehran, 1357 Sh./1978-79), p. 28.
125. *ibid.*, p. 12.
126. *ibid.*, pp. 92-4.
127. Mahdī Bāzargān, *Gumrahān* (Tehran, 1362 Sh./1983-84), pp. 92-3.
128. Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir Ṣadr, *Inqilāb-i mahdī wa pindārha*, transl. by S. A. 'Alam al-Hudā (Tehran, 1363 Sh./1984-85), p. 19.
129. 'Allāma Maḥmūd Shaltūt, *Sayrī dar ta'ālīm-i Islām*, transl. by S. K. Khalīlīyān (Tehran, 1344 Sh./1965-66), p. 146.

